

Notes from the Golden Plains Federation Meeting

September 2022 – Wolf Point

1. What is the greatest benefit of the federation to you and your library? To your library patrons?
 - Money - mentioned several times
 - Information
 - Face to face meetings; networking
 - Brainstorming about issues with similar libraries
 - Several wishes for more frequent meetings
 - For patrons - money to improve library, everything good (info, collaboration, etc) eventually filters to the patrons

2. What is missing for your patrons and/or your library when it comes to the structure of the federation or the services it provides?
 - Patrons are pretty unaware of federation/structure etc
 - Maybe more centralized training - for example the state trains a person from each federation then they pass it along back home
 - More meetings, more money
 - Library Specific IT support; lots of varied issues with both IT support and equipment

3. What would you change about the current structure or funding of the federation?
 - Everyone really wishes they could get the money at the beginning of the fiscal year as their governing bodies don't like them spend funds they haven't received yet.
 - Otherwise, they think the structure is good and feel like Golden Plains work well together

4. The legislative intent listed in the Montana Code Annotated is “It is the policy of the legislature to encourage the most efficient delivery of library services to the people of Montana. To that end the state should be divided into regions within which libraries desiring to participate in the distribution of such state funding to libraries as may be available from time to time shall organize into library federations to pool resources and information and avoid duplication of effort.”
 - a. Is this still relevant? Why or why not?
 - They do think this is relevant to Golden Plains
 - They've tried to invite other types of libraries but there was no funding or votes for them so they didn't ever get much attendance
 - They don't currently pool physical resources so they're curious about that
 - They definitely share some info but are interested in sharing more, pooling innovations
 - b. Does the current structure/funding of federations support this intent? Why or why not?
 - Yes, but they'd like to meet more often

- Meeting more often does require balancing the time away from the library; their travel is so far from the "center" of the state
- They do feel like their geographical area has unique challenges and it's good that they can get support from each other
- Discussion of maybe having federation retreats, where a couple of federations work together to run them
- Excited that if the legislation to fund library development programs works out, federation money could be used elsewhere. (Currently, federation money mostly goes to those services: MSC, OCLC, etc)